

Message Text

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FOLLOWING ANKARA 06612 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ISTANBUL
IZMIR ADANA SEPT 6, 1977 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 6612

DEPT MAY WISH TO PASS TO OTHER ADDRESSEES

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TU

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S INITIAL CONVERSATION WITH
PRIME MINISTER

1. AMBASSADOR PAID HIS INITIAL CALL ON PRIMIN DEMIREL
AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 6. DCM ACCOMPANIED. NO OTHER
TURKISH OFFICIALS PRESENT.

2. PRIMIN WAS SOBER, FRIENDLY AND THOUGHTFUL. RESPOND-
ING TO AMBASSADOR'S BRIEF PRELIMINARY REMARKS, HE PLUNGED
INTO REVIEW OF RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HIS
TONE THROUGHOUT WAS OF SORROW, NOT OF ANGER. THE
SUBSTANCE OF HIS REMARKS WERE FAMILIAR: THERE WAS NOT
SUBSTANTIVE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE US AND TURKEY. TURKEY
HAS BEEN AND WISHES TO REMAIN A LOYAL ALLY. THE CYPRUS
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PROBLEM IS ONE BETWEEN TURKEY AND ONE OF HER NEIGHBORS.
IN A DETACHED MANNER, HE RAN OVER THE ARGUEMENTS
JUSTIFYING TURKEY'S INTERVENTION ON THE ISLAND, I.E.,
PROTECTION OF TURK-CYPRIOTS, DEFENSE OF TURKISH NATIONAL
(PRESUMABLY STRATEGIC) INTERESTS, AND TURKISH RIGHT TO
DO SO AS GUARANTOR. (NONE OF THIS WAS STRIDENT.) THE
IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS, THEREFORE,

WAS THE ARMS EMBARGO. HE BELIEVED IT WAS WRONG, THAT IT RUN COUNTER TO PURPOSES INTENDED BY ITS AUTHORS AND THAT LOGICALLY SINCE US DID NOT REPEAT NOT BENEFIT FROM A WEAKENED TURKEY, US INTERESTS HAD BEEN HARMED AS WELL. HE REFERRED TO HIS CONVERSATION IN LONDON WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND SAID THAT WHEN THE PRESIDENT HAD ASKED HIM THEN WHAT HE COULD DO TO IMPROVE US-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP, HE HAD REPLIED " LIFT THE EMBARGO AND PASS THE DCA." THIS WAS STILL HIS ANSWER. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT SOME PEOPLE ARGUED THAT EVEN THOUGH CYPRUS AND US-TURKISH DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP SHOULD NOT BE LINKED, IT HAD IN FACT BEEN LINKED BY THE CONGRESS. HE FOUND THIS ILLOGICAL. CONGRESS SHOULD BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT LINKAGE DID NOT SERVE ANY INTERESTS, EITHER TURKISH OR AMERICAN. AMONG OTHER THINGS, TURKEY WAS BEING ASKED AT THE BEGINNING OF A NEGOTIATION TO SAY WHAT IT WOULD SETTLE FOR, RATHER THAN AT THE END. IN A REFERENCE TO THE RECENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, PRIMIN SAID POINTEDLY THAT ISSUE OF US RELATIONSHIP WAS NOT RAISED DESPITE PRESSURES TO DO SO.

3. AMBASSADOR TOLD PRIMIN HE WAS PERSONALLY DEDICATED TO IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. HE REFERRED TO HIS OWN CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND EMPHASIZED GENUINENESS OF PRESIDENT'S BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS AND HIS DETERMINATION TO RESTORE THOSE RELATIONS TO

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THEIR FORMER STATE OF HEALTH. US ALSO FELT THAT IT HAD INTERESTS IN EARLY PROGRESS ON CYPRUS, WHICH, IF UNRESOLVED, WOULD ONLY FURTHER HURT RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO VALUED ALLIES, AND THUS NATO. WHILE PRESIDENT DID NOT LINK CYPRUS AND DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WE HAD TO RECOGNIZE REALITY OF CONGRESSIONAL OPINION ON THIS MATTER. HE HOPED TO WORK WITH TURKS TO IDENTIFY PRACTICAL STEPS WHICH COULD LEAD US OUT OF OUR PRESENT IMPASSE. AMBASSADOR ADDED THAT SECRETARY VANCE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO AN OPPORTUNITY IN NEW YORK SHORTLY TO EXCHANGE IDEAS WITH TURKISH FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL AND THAT EVEN BEFORE THOSE TALKS TOOK PLACE, A GROUP OF SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WOULD BE VISITING TURKEY TO SEE WHAT IDEAS COULD BE DEVELOPED. THESES MEETINGS REPRESENTED AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO MOVE THINGS FORWARD BOTH ON CYPRUS AND ON OUR DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP.

4. PRIMIN INDICATED HIS PLEASURE IN THESE INITIATIVES BUT DID NOT COMMENT SUBSTANTIVELY ON THEM. HE THEN REFERRED TO TURKEY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH HE THOUGHT WERE SHORT-RANGE. HE STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUED HIGH GROWTH RATES FOR SOCIAL STABILITY AND FOR TO BRINGING

TURKEY NEARER TO EC NORMS, AND REFERRED TO GOOD OUTLOOK FOR A STRONG TURKISH ECONOMY IN FUTURE. HE OBLIQUELY REPEATED NOW FAMILIAR ACCUSATION THAT US IS IMPOSING AN ECONOMIC EMBARGO BY SAYING THAT HIS FINANCIAL OFFICIALS WERE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING LOANS AND THAT "CYPRUS WAS BEING CITED BY BANKERS AS THE REASON. AMBASSADOR REFUTED THIS IMPLIED ACCUSATION BY SAYING STRAIGHTFORWARDLY THAT IT WAS TRUE THAT FOREIGN AND US BANKERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN DEBT AND PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF SHORT-RANGE DEBT COMING DUE. MANY COUNTRIES AND PARTICULARLY THOSE DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED OIL WERE HAVING PROBLEMS SIMILAR TO TURKEY'S. AMBASSADOR ASSERTED FIRMLY, HOWEVER, THAT THE US WAS NOT IN ANY CONFIDENTIAL

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WAY CONTRIBUTING TO TURKEY'S SHORT-TERM DIFFICULTIES. WE HAD HEARD ACCUSATION OF ECONOMIC EMBARGO AND IT WAS NOT TRUE. FURTHERMORE, AMBASSADOR ADDED, IN VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS HE HAD HAD WITH BANKERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, THE WORD CYPRUS HAD NEVER ONCE COME UP AS A REASON FOR BANKERS CONCERNS, WHICH APPEARED TO BE GENUINELY BASED ON PURELY ECONOMIC FACTORS. BY IMPLICATION, PRIMIN BACKED OFF HALF A STEP AND REVIEWED SHORT-TERM TURKISH PROBLEMS, E.G. DOLS 150 MILLION A MOTH TO PAY FOR OIL AND AN UNEXPECTED DROP OFF IN EXPORTS AMOUNTING TO DOLS 500 MILLION IN THE PAST YEAR. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT TURKEY WAS CURRENTLY IN FOOD SURPLUS AND HAD LARGE EXPORTABLE STOCKS OF WHEAT, COTTON AND EDIBLE OIL. IN NEXT TWO MONTHS, HOWEVER, TURKEY WOULD NEED TO BUY LARGE AMOUNTS OF FERTILIZER.

5. THE CONVERSATION ENDED ON PARTICULARLY FRIENDLY NOTE AS DEMIREL REITERATED HIS STRONGLY HELD BELIEF GOING BACK MANY YEARS IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. AS HE WALKED AMBASSADOR TO THE DOOR, HE MENTIONED HIS PLEASURE IN WARMTH OF TONE OF THE LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM PRESIDENT CARTER CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS RETURN TO OFFICE. HE SAID THAT HE WAS AN OLD FRIEND OF THE US AND IMPLIED THAT HE EXPECTED TO REMAIN THAT WAY.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO CLUE AS TO WHY DEMIREL SUDDENLY DECIDED TO RECEIVE AMBASSADOR. IT IS WORTH NOTING HOWEVER THAT AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WAS FIRST ONE RECEIVED BY DEMIREL SINCE HIS ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE ON JULY 22, 1977, DESPITE FACT OTHERS- INCLUDING BRITISH- HAVE BEEN WAITING IN LINE LONGER. DEMIREL'S STATEMENT OF TURKISH POSITION IS CLEARLY CONVENTIONAL, BUT HE NODDED CONFIDENTIAL

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APPROVINGLY WHEN AMBASSADOR CITED JUSTICE PARTY'S OWN PROGRAM AS MODERATE ON CYPRUS AND CALLING FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE. HIS ONLY DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS WAS HIS COMMENT THAT TURKEY COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO STATE ITS POSITION AT THE BEGINNING OF A NEGOTIATION. HE WAS TALKING ABOUT CYPRUS BUT CONTEXTUALLY SEEMED TO BE INCLUDING A POSSIBLE US-TURKISH NEGOTIATION IN HIS REMARK. DEMIREL SEEMED TO BE CONCERNED, ALTHOUGH NOT UNCONFIDENT. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT GO BEYOND GERERALITIES, THE WARMTH WITH WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED HIMSELF AS A LONG-TIME FRIEND OF THE US WAS PERSUASIVE. WE BELIEVE THIS CONVERSATION WAS A GOOD BEGINNING FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AMBASSADOR AND PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL. SPIERS UNQUOTE VANCE

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